

**East County Citizens Advisory Board (ECCAB)**  
**3300 Briggs Chaney Road, Silver Spring, MD 20904**

April 1, 2015  
MEETING SUMMARY

**Members Present:** Fisseha Adugna, Erik Amick, Roy Chavera, Samantha Blizzard, Marya Ford, Alison Praisner Klumpp, Peter Myo Khin, Allan Mulligan, Len Newman, Anthony Ramirez, Jerold Samet, Jason Washington, Teddy WU.

**Guests Present:** Councilmember Nancy Navarro, Ed Weiler, Bertha Flores, Alison Wakefield, Alex J. Roberts, Joann Burl, George Griffin, Mensah Adjogah, Kim Jones, Alcira Groomes, Brigid Smith, Mara Parker

**Staff Present:** Jewru Bandeh

**Citizens' Forum:** Ed Weiler of Broadmore Hills talked about public safety related concerns and need for the County hiring more officers.

**Approval of the March 4, 2015 Meeting Summary:** Approved by all members present.

ECCAB Chair Marya Ford opened the meeting with a proposal to change the meeting agenda to allow more time for the guest speakers. The motion was made and approved to allow meeting time on the two presentations only.

**Presentation by Special Guests:**

**Councilwoman Nancy Navarro**, one of three speakers opened the discussion speaking on ***"Developing an Aggressive Economic Development Strategy in order to Fund our Social Infrastructure."***

- Bill 1215: this bill she sponsored provides priority status for NGOs helping low income families for use of public facilities.
- Emphasized that if we successfully fund regional economic development programs, citizens can have better chances to improved health, job access.
- Placed emphasis on having a well defined and clear strategy for guiding her work.
- Data chart (2014) from the PowerPoint for Montgomery County shows that the County is doing relatively well locally with unemployment at 4.6% vs. State's 5.9% mark.

**Total Jobs and Federal Jobs by Jurisdiction**

- Montgomery County is doing better than Fairfax County based on 2011-14 statistics.
- The County is one of 40 counties nationwide with AAA bonding rating.

- Starting in 2010, the County started using a 6 year budget to guide long term plans.
- The County is interested in smart growth and redevelopment in all corners to strengthen its tax base.

During the recession, the County had to cut 10 percent of its workforce. She emphasized a reversal of this situation to an increase in employment opportunities in coming years.

- White Oak Science Gateway Master Plan has been approved July 2014
- Discussion of recently approved plans, upcoming plans and approved plans
- Discussion of jobs, amenities and mass transit impacting Route 29.
- A public hearing on a transportation study will be held 4/14/2015 and the County Council is expected to vote on the supplemental appropriation.
- The White Oak shopping center continues to present a challenge.
- Contrast between White Oak and the Wheaton Redevelopment project was emphasized.

### **Glenmont Sector Plan**

Councilmember Navarro discussed how the shopping center aspect continues to be a challenge. Council has committed \$144million for Parking Lot B, office building, residential apartment building and retail establishments. Construction is expected in Spring of 2016 and to be completed in the Fall of 2018.

### **Workforce Development**

Councilmember Navarro spoke further on education as a facilitator for economic development. Improving workforce training and addressing educational challenges will make the County more globally competitive and ready for tomorrow. She spoke of a report with (6) recommendations that aligns the Summit's goal of closing gaps of achievement thereby empowering groups.

Navarro noted that she is focused on teacher and staff diversity in the public schools, based on the fact that 70% of ESOL students in our public schools are US citizens; 21.5% represents African American and 28.3% is Hispanic.

### **Plaza Del Mercado**

Councilmember Navarro stated that the County has been working on this project since 2011. LA Fitness and ALDI an offshoot of Trader Joes are contenders to open their businesses there. She emphasized that the Colesville Improvement Project is not part of the White Oak Master Plan. She's launched a Latino Civic Project to increase civic engagement.

In closing, she talked about the 2015-2018 County Goals and Priorities:

- Operationalizing the White Oak Science Gateway Master Plan
- Frame a strategy for closing the academic achievement gap as an economic imperative
- Develop a framework for policymakers to implement related policies

**Presentation by George Griffin, Director, Montgomery County Department of Liquor Control included:**

A description of the department; a review of the legislative mandate for the establishment of the Local Control Board (LCB); liquor control in other states, including 17 States that have liquor control boards (25% of the US sale of alcohol is managed by a local or regional Local Control Board. He discussed the positive implications of Maryland having a LCB including a statistical decrease in alcohol abuse. He talked about the two purposes of LCBs: 1) Revenue generator and 2) to enhance responsible consumption. He talked about his department's revenues, contributions and transfers to the general fund;

**Presentation by the Office of the County Executive's Comprehensive Economic Strategy Team – TIP Strategies /Business Development Advisors,** covered the firm's research and work on developing economic development recommendations and ideas to the County for improving its business and economic development future. Their approach included:

- Developing strategies with a 5 year implementation plan
- Identifying effort to synthesize best practices and carryover lessons learned from other cities, counties and regions for improving the County's economic development goals and objectives

The consultants welcomed ECCAB and East County citizens' input which would be integrated into studies and recommendations as appropriate. Input from board members included comments that the focus should be on implementation. And that focus should not solely be tech centric jobs but that any plan or set of goals should simply be to enhance the available jobs for the general workforce – those without tech backgrounds or particular tech training. The proximity of our region to the BWI airport was discussed as an economic facilitator or advantage.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.